1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

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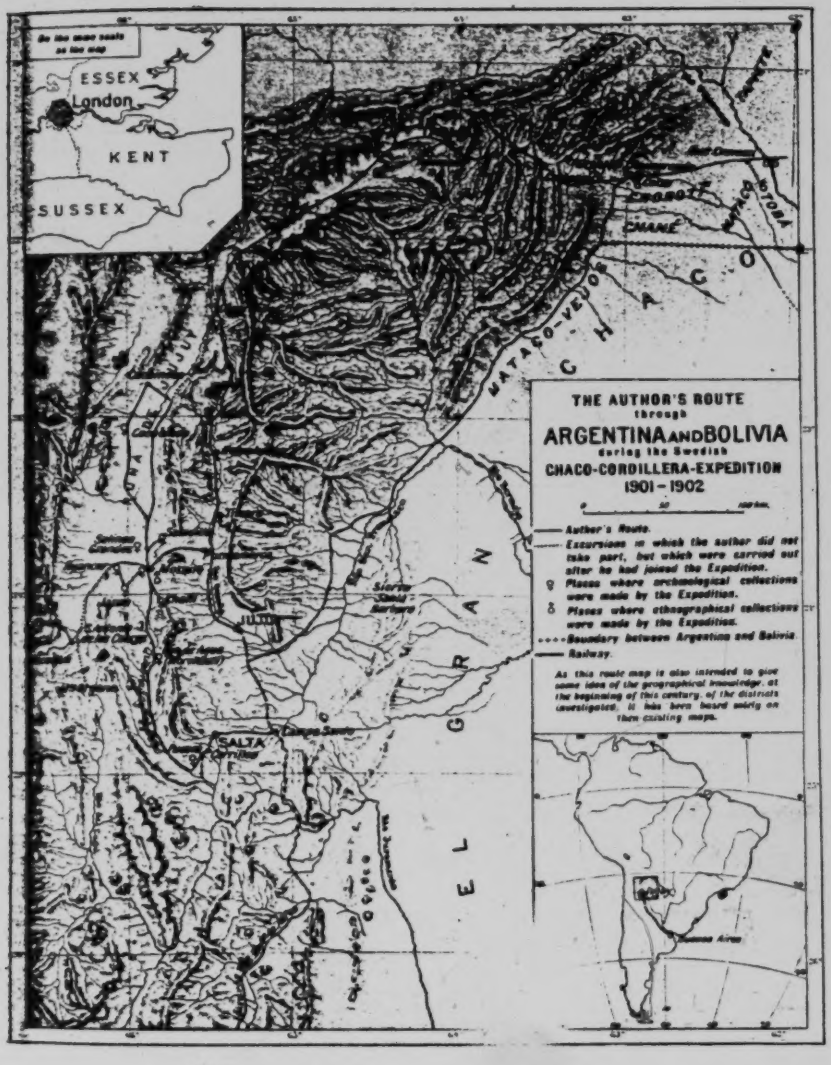


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1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6



114 Pilcomayo,[1] whilst our countryman, Professor Lindman, has supplied very valuable contribution to our knowledge of the eastern parts of the Chaco.[2] Among the more important works on the Chaco that had been published prior to our expedition, those by Lozano[3], Peña[4] and Fontana[5] should also be mentioned, as they contain geographical, meteorological, ethnological, zoological and botanical data of great interest.

At the time of our expedition, the regions including the course of the Pilcomayo through the more central parts of the Chaco were, from a scientific point of view, still to a large extent completely unknown. It was in the attempt to explore these regions that Crevaux perished, and in the interior of the Chaco the two explorers, Ibareta and Boggiani, had also been killed by Indians. The murder of Ibareta took place the year before our expedition, and Boggiani fell a victim to the Indians in the same year that we visited the Chaco. Lista, too, met his death in this region shortly before our journey; according to his companions' statement, he took his own life.

After our expedition, and apart from Baron Nordenskiöld, many other explorers, among them the Finlander, Professor Rafael Karsten, have travelled in the Chaco and carried on extensive research work.

133 As I have already mentioned, the Gran Chaco is a partly wooded plain. In the eastern or central parts of the region the ground is not known to present any marked elevations, and it is only in the portion nearest to the Andes that any appreciable hills or rises are found.

Three large rivers, the Pilcomayo (fig. 1), the Bermejo and the Salado (Juramento) flow through the Chaco from north-east to south-west. Besides these, all the year round water-bearing rivers, there are, during the latter part of the dry season, only a very few water courses, the majority of which periodically dry up for part of the year; consequently, the country is exceedingly waterless.

132 133 During the rainy season, which practically coincides with the summer and, therefore, lasts from and including November until the end of April, the volume of water in the rivers increases rapidly, and here and there the rivers rise above their banks and flood large areas. Beds of water-

[1] Storm.
[2] Lindman (1) and (2).
[3] Lozano (1).
[4] Peña (1).
[5] Fontana (1).

courses that during a great part of the year are without a trace of moisture, in the rainy season turn into mighty rivers (as Rio Seco, fig. 2), and during this period all depressions in the ground are filled with water, so that the dry-soil forests and grass steppes of the Chaco to a large extent are under water. Vast areas then change into typical marshland, with the fauna and flora that characterize marshes.

Fig. 1. The author testing the currents of the Rio Pilcomayo, so as to calculate the course for a later swim across. On the bank, a Bolivian soldier from Fort Crevaux. Gran Chaco. Bolivia.

The climate of the Chaco is tropical. During the summer-half of the year, the heat, especially in the dry-soil forests, is extremely trying. On the open grass steppes the heat is often tempered by currents of air, but in the forests the air is usually perfectly still, and as the stunted and scantily foliaged trees, of which the dry-soil forests of the Chaco mainly consist, hardly afford any shade at all, here the heat feels exceedingly oppressive. In the winter time the heat is naturally not so trying (at nights the temperature may go down to + 10° C.), but dust storms and dearth of water are the cause of long journeys on the Chaco even during this season being often attended by considerable difficulties and discomfort.

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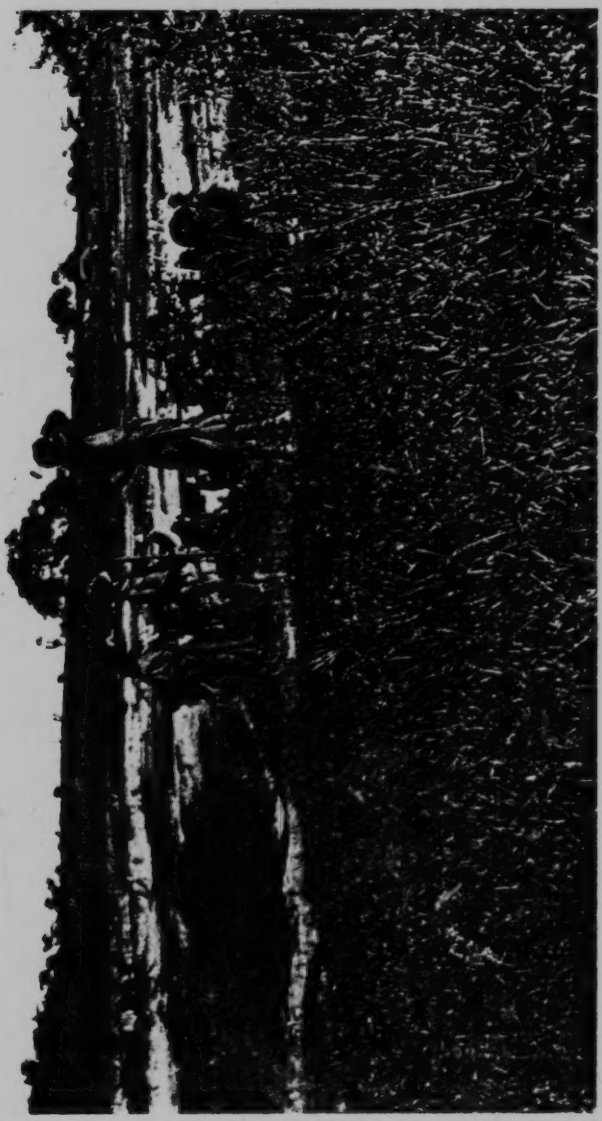

Fig. 8. Steppe with acacias. In foreground, watchful Choroti Indians. Tatarenda. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. Photo. F. v. R.



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1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

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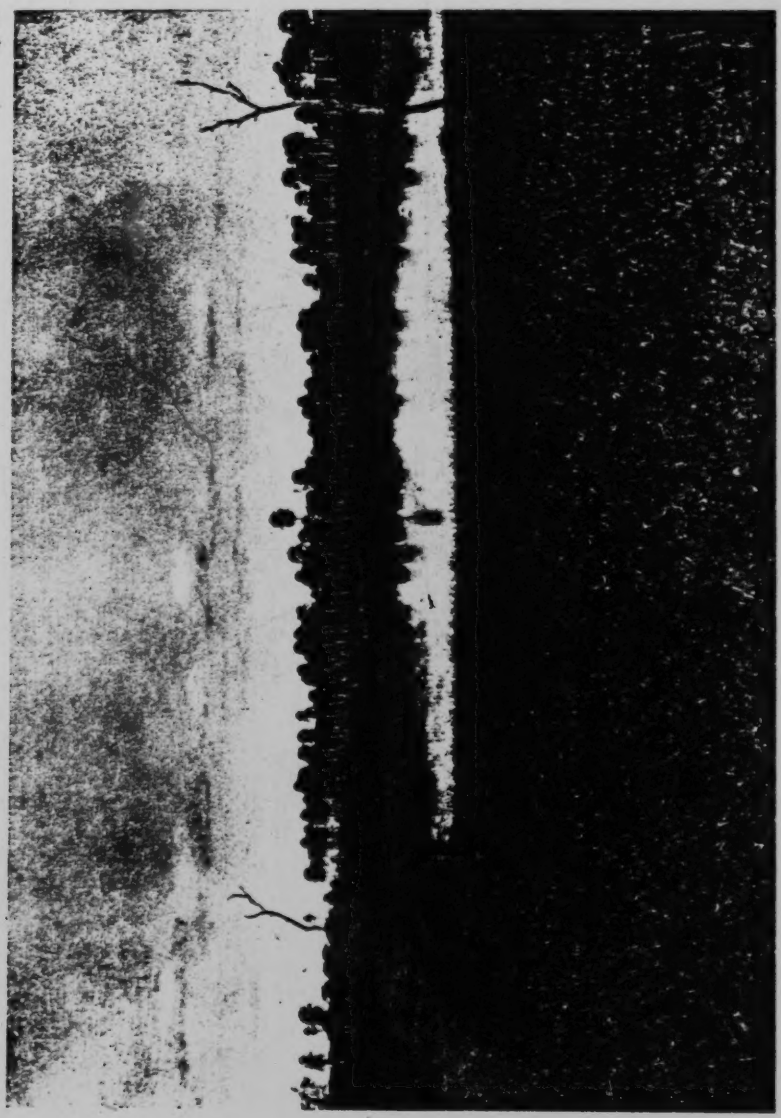

Fig. 9. Lagoon near a grove of fan-palms (Copernicia australis). Tatarenda, Gran Chaco, Bolivia. Photo. J. v. R.

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Fig. 109. Indians searching for ostriches. Choroti. Gran Chaco Bolivia Photo. E. v. R.

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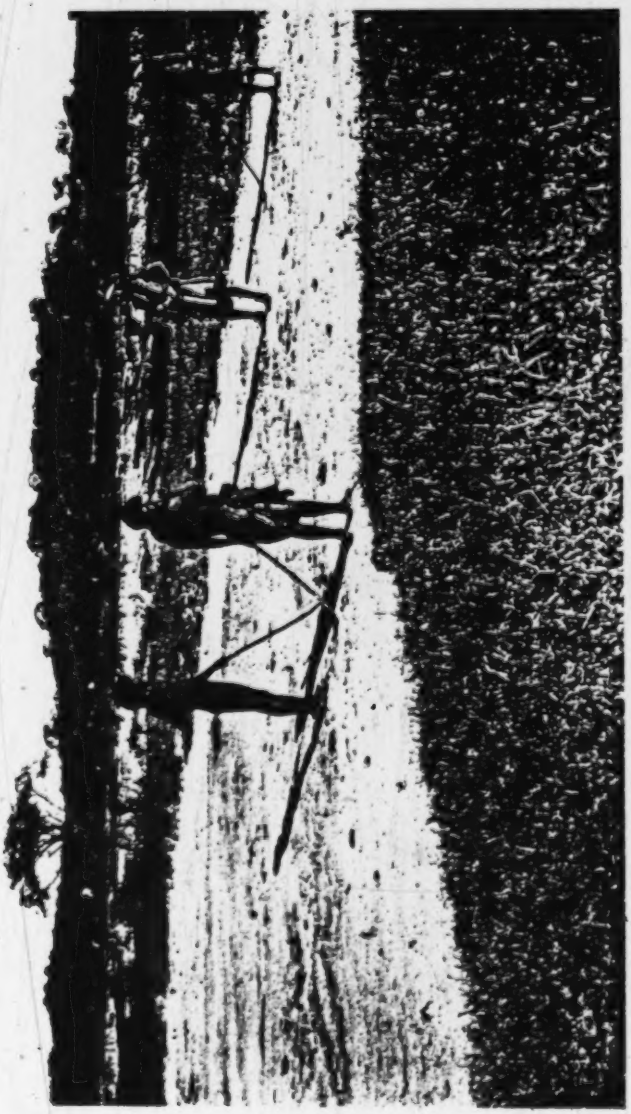

Fig. 177. Boys practising a ball game resembling hockey. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. Photo. E. v. R.



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2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909) 1919
SK6 Choroti SK6
Ashluslay SK5



The Ashluslay are called *Suhin*[1]) by the Lengua-Mascoy, *Etéhua* by the Tapiete, *Áshli* by the Choroti, *Sówua* or *Sówuash* by the Mataco, and *Sotegraik*[2]) by the Toba. A 101

They call themselves *Ashluslay*, as I have ascertained, and this is confirmed by HUNT[3]). The latter says it is the settlers on the lower Pilcomayo that call them Chunupi, a circumstance which has evidently misled him to identify them with a tribe of that name which has been known for a long time. The statements of settlers are to be taken with caution. An error of the same kind is to call the Ashluslay Tapiete.

The Choroti call themselves *Yóshuaha* (*Yójuaha*, acc. to HUNT.) However, I have preferred the former name, this being, moreover, the form in which it generally appears in the literature of the subject. It derives originally from the Chiriguano. They are called *Mánuc* or *Máuinc* by the Mataco. C 101

No archaeological investigations of any kind have been carried out in the territory of the Choroti and Ashluslay Indians. Not a single old grave, not one old dwelling has been examined there. And probably an archaeological examination of their territory would yield but little. It is exclusively the modern civilisation of these Indians from which we will try to draw some conclusions anent their history. A C 172

The Choroti and the Ashluslay live on and in the vicinity of the Rio Pilcomayo, a considerable river which flows down from the Bolivian plateau into the Rio Paraguay. A C 131

For the greater part the Rio Pilcomayo is not properly navigable. About where it cuts the tropic of Capricorn it loses itself in extensive swamps, the well-known «Esteros del Padre Patiño». It has a very unsettled course. More than once it has changed its course, and as you go from the A C 133

[1]) HUNT, p. 257.
[2]) FRIC (1) p. 210.
[3]) p. 257.

2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909)1919
SK6 Choroti SK6
Ashluslay SK5



A C 133

river into the interior you will find numerous remains of old river-beds, which in places now form lakes. A few miles from the Andes there is not a stone to be found in the Chaco. The soil consists of fine earth, which is transformed in the dry season into whirling dust, and in the rainy season into mud. In the dry season large tracts are flooded. The Rio Pilcomayo is also of great importance to the Indians on account of the abundance of fish in it.

A C 137

The woods alternate in the Gran Chaco with grassy plains. In some districts there are considerable clumps of palms, not those with paripinnate leaves, which are so useful to the Indians, but with fanshaped leaves, which are of little use. There are no trees from whose bark cloth can be made, as in the primeval forests of N.E. Bolivia. In the woods there grows, however, a spiny plant[1]), known as Caraguatá[2]) or Chahuar[3]). It is of great importance to the Indians, its filaments providing them with material for string rope, clothes etc.

The arrow-grass[4]) which can be used for so many purposes, is lacking in the Chaco. Edible wild fruits occur in the Chaco in an abundance that is quite unusual in S. America. Some of these, such as Algarrobo[5]) Chañar[6]) Tusca[7]) and Mistol[8]), are of supreme importance to the Indians. The abundance of wild fruits, as well as the intensive dryness during part of the year and the floods during another part, account for agriculture being so undeveloped in the Chaco.

A C 136

The stock of game is poor in the interior of the Chaco, or at least in such parts as I have visited. The most impor-

[1]) Bromelia.
[2]) Guarani.
[3]) Quichua.
[4]) Gynerium saccharoides.
[5]) Prosopis.
[6]) Gourliea decortitans.
[7]) Acacia aroma.
[8]) Zizyphus Mistol.

6: Nordenskiöld--156 E-5 (1908-1909) 1912 SF10 Chiriguano SF/0

Mataco SF7

Choroti SK6

Chane SF8

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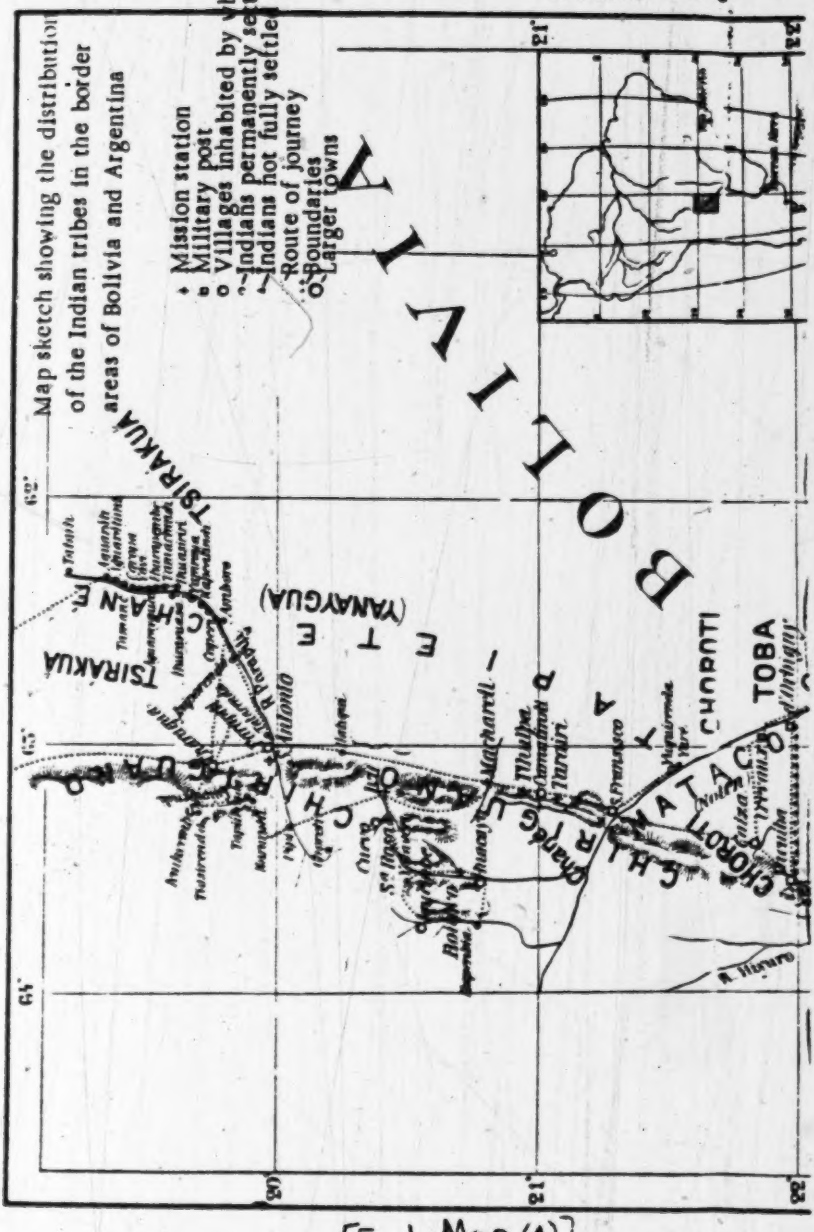


[End Map,(A)]

E. Nordenskiöld--157 E-5 (1908-1909) 1912 SF10 Chiriguano SF10
Mataco SF7
Chunoti SF6
Chané SF8